



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Daniel G. Stec

## Stec advocates for Lyme and tick-borne disease budget funding

DANIEL G. STEC March 10, 2021

| ISSUE: **LYME AND TICK-BORNE DISEASES**

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Senator Dan Stec is requesting funding be included in this year's State Budget to combat Lyme and other tick-borne diseases.

"I love every minute being outdoors," said Stec, an Adirondack 46er. "Whether you're hiking in the back country, taking your dog for a walk or playing with the kids in the backyard, Lyme and tick-borne disease is a real concern. Education is important, including knowing

how to avoid being bitten, how to detect and properly remove a tick and what to do with it. So, too, is surveillance of tick prevalence and medical research into better diagnostics and treatments. On all of these fronts, our state should be doing a better job providing financial support.”

Stec, a member of the Senate’s Health Committee, said Governor Andrew Cuomo’s Executive Budget does not include any funding to target Lyme and tick-borne diseases. The budget proposal would cut \$250,000 in legislative additions that were part of the current year’s budget as well as cut \$69,400 in annual Department of Health funding for research, prevention and detection efforts.

Stec and 16 other senators have written a letter to Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins requesting \$1.5 million in the FY 21-22 budget. A new state budget is due by April 1.

The lawmakers in the letter noted that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimate that almost half a million people are diagnosed and treated for Lyme disease each year in the United States—a significant update from the CDC’s previous estimate of approximately 300,000 cases annually.

“COVID understandably pushed a lot of important health issues to the backburner,” said Stec. “But we can’t lose sight of other diseases like Lyme, which if not detected early and successfully treated can have a devastating health impact.”